Demand for Merger of 50% Dearness Allowance (DA) with Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA) of Gramin Dak Sevaks: The Government had allowed Time Related Continuity Allowance (TRCA) of Gramin Dak Sevaks: as full and final settlement of Justice Talwar Committee recommendations and Cabinet had approved merger of DA only for regular Central Government employees. Therefore, the benefit of merger of 50% DA with TRCA has not been extended to the GDSs who are outside the regular Civil Service.

Recovery of outstanding dues of MTNL and BSNL

*236. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the arrears by way of telephone dues payable by the Central Government and the State Governments to MTNL and BSNL as at September end this year;

(b) the steps taken to recover and clear the dues so far and the success achieved in such recoveries, indicating the latest balance of the arrears; and

(c) whether any State Governments have asked the telephone authorities not to disconnect the telephones for defaults in payment; if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN): (a) The arrears of telephone dues payable by the Central Government and State Governments to MTNL and BSNL as at September end is as under:—

	Central Government	State Government
MTNL	Rs. 17 crores	Rs. 3 crores
BSNL	Rs. 56 crores	Rs. 223 crores

(b) The steps taken to recover and clear the dues so far are as under:—

(i) Telephonic reminders are issued to the defaulting subscribers.

(ii) Personal visits are made by senior officers to the concerned Department.

(iii) D.O. Letter from the Heads of Circles are addressed to Chief Secretaries of concerned State Governments and heads of Departments.

(iv) Telephones are disconnected excepting the exempted category phones.

An amount of Rs. 25 crores from the Central Government and Rs. 55 crores from State Governments recovered from April, 2004 to September, 2004 in respect of bills issued upto March, 2004, leaving latest balance as shown in para (a) above.

(c) While MTNL has not received any such requests, in case of BSNL State Governments of Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Orisa, U.P. and West Bengal have requested not to disconnect telephones belonging to State and Cabinet Ministers, Senior Officers up to the Secretary level, officers dealing with Law and Order and Judiciary. A view is taken on such requests by BSNL from time to time.

Medium of examination for DSPs/Asstt. Commandants

*237. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the selection of DSPs/Assistant Commandant etc. for the para-military forces is being done by the Union Public Service Commission during the last few years;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the written tests are held only in Hindi and English; and

(c) whether Government would allow all the languages listed in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution as a medium for these examinations as in the case of the Civil Services Examination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Yes, Sir. The examination for the post of Assistant Commandant in various para-military forces was held by Union Public Service Commission for the first time on 12th october, 2003. The second and latest such examination was held by the Commission on 3rd October, 2004.